

# THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR

Operation  
Iraqi Freedom





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## Training to fight

Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Stephen Hartley mans the Boatswain's Mate of the Watch position in the pilot house of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) during a General Quarters (GQ) drill. Reagan is currently deployed as part of a routine rotation of U.S. maritime forces in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the region. Photo by PHAN (AW) Christine Singh



## On the front cover



**Cover photo by**  
PH3 Dominique Lasco

Looking over the aircraft, a quality assurance petty officer from the "Eagles" of Strike Fighter Squadron One One Five (VFA-115) performs a pre-flight inspection on an F/A-18E "Super Hornet" before flight operations on the flight deck of the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76).

This newspaper is an authorized publication for military members on board USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Contents of The Great Communicator are not the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the United States Navy.

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# Sailors keep in touch with United through Reading

By PHAN Thomas Kuhl

Staff Writer

The Family Literacy Foundation's United through Reading program (UTR) aboard USS Ronald Reagan is making deployment a little easier for many Sailors. UTR helps deployed servicemembers keep in touch with their children.

"Even if you don't have children of your own, you can still participate in the program," said Aviation Structural Mechanic 1st Class (AW) David Lopez. "You can read to your brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews or even your neighbor's kids if you would like."

According to Lopez, the program is simple and

easy to participate in. First, the participant decides who want to read to and then pick out a book. Once they are ready to record, they can go to deck house three (1-180-3-Q) and sign up for an open time slot.

"We are taping from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. and then again from 1 p.m. until 3:00a.m.," said Lopez. "No matter what your work schedule is, there is a time slot that will work for you."

"Now is the perfect time to participate in the UTR Program," said Lopez. "The DVDs and video tapes have always been free, but now that we are in Fifth Fleet AOR, the mailing is free as well."

According to Lopez, more than 450 Sailors have participated in the program since it began, some taping multiple sessions.

"I just sent my first session home for my son," said Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class (AW/SW) Shari Doyle, UTR videographer and participant. "He loved it, and it was more personal than email because he could see who was talking to him."

The program will continue through the rest of the deployment.

"There is still plenty of time left to read to your children," said Lopez, "Come on down and read away."



AN (AW) Daisy Abonza

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Bruce Cole reads a book on camera as part of the United Through Reading Program on board USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76).

# RRSG launches first air missions in support of OIF



PHC (SW/NAC) Spike Call

He could be your dad, your uncle, your next door neighbor, and right now he's landing a multimillion dollar F/A-18E "Superhornet" on the flight deck of America's newest Aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). Reagan is currently deployed as part of a routine rotation of U.S. maritime forces in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the region.

By JO2 (SW/AW) Shane Tuck

Staff Writer

F/A-18E Super Hornets assigned to the "Eagles" of Strike Fighter Attack Squadron (VFA) 115 became the first aircraft launched from the flight deck of USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) to drop ordnance on enemy targets in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom Feb. 22.

Reagan is the Navy's newest Nimitz-class nuclear powered aircraft carrier and is currently on its maiden deployment. Commissioned in 2003, the San Diego-based aircraft carrier is part of a routine rotation of U.S. maritime forces in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations.

"Our air wing is comprised of the most advanced aircraft in the world and is a key player in deterring aggression from the insurgency within Iraq," said Rear Adm. Michael H. Miller, commander, Carrier Strike Group 7. "With the speed, agility and persistence of

OIF ... Cont. on page 4



# InsiderdotCom

## Laughter Central

[www.humorshack.com](http://www.humorshack.com)

Humorshack.com claims to be the biggest humor source on the internet and they could be right. Categories include jokes, flash animations, cartoons and even brainteasers. In each category there are hundreds of jokes and pictures to get a chuckle out of you. Once you choose what category you want, there are sub categories to choose from. For example, the jokes category contains political jokes, sports jokes and a few others. Do you like blonde jokes? Yup, it's got those. How about the ultimate in "Your Mom" jokes? Yeah, it has those too. So get online and check it out. Humorshack.com is the perfect site for your daily fix of comedy.

## HTML Humor

[www.thehumorarchives.com](http://www.thehumorarchives.com)

This website is exactly what it says -- archives of humor. The site consists of an easy to use search engine, daily jokes. It's categorized for easy browsing, too. If you need a dose of political humor or perhaps some cartoons or funny quotes, these categories and many more are at your disposal. The site is fast because of its html construction, so there should be no problem getting your fill of comedy. There is also a newsletter so you can have your daily dose of humor emailed to you and you can start your day off right. Get out there and have a good laugh. After being at work all day, you probably need one -- that and a good shower.

## This Day in History

### 1964 The leaning tower needs help

On February 27, 1964, the Italian government announces that it is accepting suggestions on how to save the renowned Leaning Tower of Pisa from collapse. The top of the 180-foot tower was hanging 17 feet south of the base, and studies showed that the tilt was increasing by a fraction every year.

### 1936 Shirley Temple receives \$50,000 a film

Shirley Temple receives a new contract from 20th Century Fox that will pay the seven-year-old star \$50,000 a film.

## OIF

*Continued from page 3*

the modern carrier strike group, we intend to make a difference in helping to set the conditions for security and stability."

According to Miller, an important part of the strike group's mission in the Persian Gulf is to support troops on the ground while they work to provide training and support to Iraqi forces.

"The coalition efforts are designed to enable Iraqis to defeat the insurgency by building their own security force and political process," he said. "Our goal is to enable the Iraqis to rebuild and secure their country with assistance from the United States and coalition forces."

Capt. Terry Kraft, Reagan's commanding officer, emphasized that the Reagan Carrier Strike Group has trained for months, and the officers and crew are prepared to successfully carry out any mission. The strike group is committed to setting conditions for security and stability within Iraq and providing the Iraqi people with the best opportunity for self-determination.

**"This is where the rubber meets the road."**

**-- Capt. Terry Kraft  
Commanding Officer**

"This is where the rubber meets the road," said Kraft. "Conducting operations in the Arabian Gulf is the culmination of our training."

The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group is currently supporting Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as conducting maritime security operations (MSO) in the Persian Gulf. MSO set the conditions for security and stability in the maritime environment, as well as complement the counter-terrorism and security efforts of regional nations. MSO deny international terrorists use of the maritime environment as a venue for attack or to transport personnel, weapons and other material.

## WANTED CAPTIONS



Calling all comedians! So you think you're pretty funny, huh? Come up with an amusing, *appropriate* caption for this photo and send it to [sennsd@cvn76.navy.mil](mailto:sennsd@cvn76.navy.mil) with "Caption Contest" in the subject line. The winning caption will be posted in the next issue.

### LAST ISSUE'S WINNERS

#### FIRST

These penicillin shots are getting ridiculous.

ATAN Matthew Bellittiere  
VFA 22

#### SECOND

Five year physicals are now being held on the flight deck.

AOC (AW/SW) Richard Ogan  
VFA 22



#### THIRD

Be vewy vewy quiet. I'm hunting Ordie chiefs.

PHI (AW/SW) John Lill  
OPS/OP





## DoD Launches Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign

By Army Sgt. Sara Wood,  
American Forces  
Press Service

**WASHINGTON (NNS)** -- The Department of Defense (DoD) launched a national program Feb. 23 to increase awareness among service members and their families about domestic violence. DoD is partnering with the National Domestic Violence Hotline for the campaign, which is themed, "Take a stand against domestic violence."

## GW Hosts Greatest Show on Earth Performers

By JOC (SW/AW/IUSS)  
Henry W. Rice, USS  
George Washington  
Public Affairs

**USS GEORGE WASHINGTON, In Port (NNS)** -- Fifteen members of the Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus dancing troupe and a circus singer visited USS George Washington (CVN 73), Feb. 23.

The visit by circus

performers, who were joined by Brad Bryant, regional vice president of marketing for Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey, and retired Air Force Col. Bob Swaney, Military Marketing Efforts in Hampton Roads, coincided with performances in the local area by the circus.

## Land Purchase Benefits Environment

By PHAN Brian Gaines,  
Fleet Public  
Affairs Center

**LA POSTA, Calif (NNS)** -- The Department of Defense (DoD), the California Resources Agency's Wildlife Conservation Board, and the Nature Conservancy held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the purchase of land near the Navy's Mountain Warfare Training Facility (MWTF) Feb. 21.

This purchase marks the first joint land acquisition under a new DoD program, known as Encroachment Partnering, to create a buffer zone between military installations and residential areas in the state.

## Late Mailing of Absentee Ballots Affects Texas Primary Deadline

From American Forces  
Press Service

**WASHINGTON (NNS)** -- A delay in the mailing of absentee ballots means ballots sent in by some service members and their families overseas for the March 7 primary election in Texas will be counted until March 20, Federal Voting Assistance Program officials here said.

Full details are available at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's Web site at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)

## National Naval Medical Center Celebrates Black History Month

By JO3 Heather Weaver,  
National Naval  
Medical Center  
Public Affairs

**BETHESDA, Md. (NNS)** -- National Naval Medical Center staff members gathered Feb. 16 to consider the importance of mentoring today's African-American youth,

for this year's Black History Month celebration.

## Stethem Makes New Friends in Nagasaki

By Ensign Grace Rodden,  
USS Stethem  
Public Affairs

**NAGASAKI, Japan (NNS)** -- During USS Stethem's (DDG 63) port visit to Nagasaki, Japan, Sailors visited the Myojoen Orphanage to spend the afternoon playing with the children there, Feb. 11.

Sailors, ranging from seaman to senior chief petty officers, met the children, participated in various activities and shared refreshments prepared by the ship.

## USS Iwo Jima Honors Historic Flag Raising

By JO1 (SW) Mike Jones,  
USS Iwo Jima  
Public  
Affairs

**USS IWO JIMA (NNS)** -- The crew of USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) braved the early morning chill Feb. 23 and assembled on the ship's flight deck to

honor a very special morning colors ceremony.

The event marked 61 years since the historic flag-raising atop Mt. Suribachi during the epic Battle of Iwo Jima in

## Vandegrift: Forward Deployed Classroom

From USS Vandegrift  
Public Affairs

**YOKOSUKA, Japan (NNS)** -- USS Vandegrift (FFG 48) traded in her job as a forward deployed frigate Jan. 27 for that of forward-deployed classroom, as she hosted 15 students from the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) Second Service School.

The school's primary focus is training selected Japanese officers and petty officers in engineering and computer science. The JMSDF school includes up to 44 weeks of English instruction.

The idea to use Vandegrift as a classroom originated with Leann Matthews, an English instructor at the school and wife of Vandegrift's command master chief.



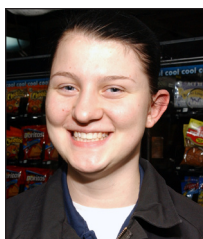
## FIVE DISK CHANGER



**IT3 Derwin Hammonds**  
"Where I'm From" JayZ



**CMDM (AW/SW) Jim DeLozier**  
"Stairway to Heaven" Led Zeppelin



**OSSN Jennifer Wise**  
"Love Rhymes with a Hideous Car Wreck" Blood Brothers



**HMC (SW/AW) Reese Ritter**  
"Take Me Out of Tampa" Joe Nichols



**A01 (AW) Toby Snowden**  
"Drunken Lullabies" Flogging Molly

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Crew,

Hey everyone, it's been a while. I hope you like the new magazine format. The CO likes it so much, he want it to come out three times a week, so starting Monday, it will. We've had to cut it down to eight pages, but you'll still get more of that Great Communicator you love.

The caption contest participation was the best I've ever seen. I sure wish you guys would respond like that every time. I got about 25 submissions. Now, not all of them were clean enough to use, but I still got a chuckle before I deleted them. So keep 'em coming.

I'm going to introduce a few new elements to the Communicator. PHAN Gorbby, one of our resident photographers, submitted a comic this issue. The CMC is going to use this corner once a week for "CMC's Corner." I also had to get rid of "Reel Time." I'm sorry, but there's just not room.

There are a few more changes coming, but I'll let it be surprise. So keep your eyes peeled and keep reading. Thanks, everyone!

Respectfully,  
The Editor

### Broadside by Jeff Bacon



### Private Murphy by Mark Baker



## Today's Movies

0830-1900

Ch. 2 - Dreamer  
Ch. 3 - 9 Spy  
Ch. 4 - Beyond the Sea  
Ch. 5 - Anistad

1900-0730

Ch. 2 - Dreamer  
Ch. 3 - Dinner Rush  
Ch. 4 - House of Flying Daggers  
Ch. 5 - Legally Blonde 2

## Tomorrow's Movies

0830-1900

Ch. 2 - North Country  
Ch. 3 - Rent  
Ch. 4 - American Pie  
Ch. 5 - In the Heat of the Night

1900-0730

Ch. 2 - North Country  
Ch. 3 - Walk the Line  
Ch. 4 - Catch 22  
Ch. 5 - Sorority Boys

## Just for Laughs

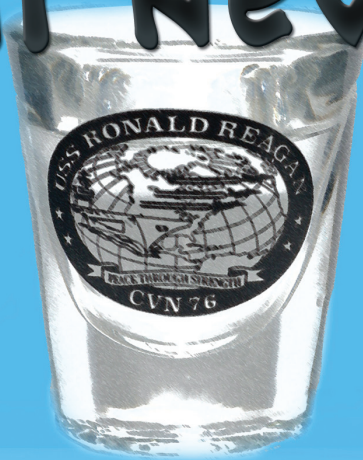
Comics provided by  
Military.com

### Sempertoons by Charles Wolf





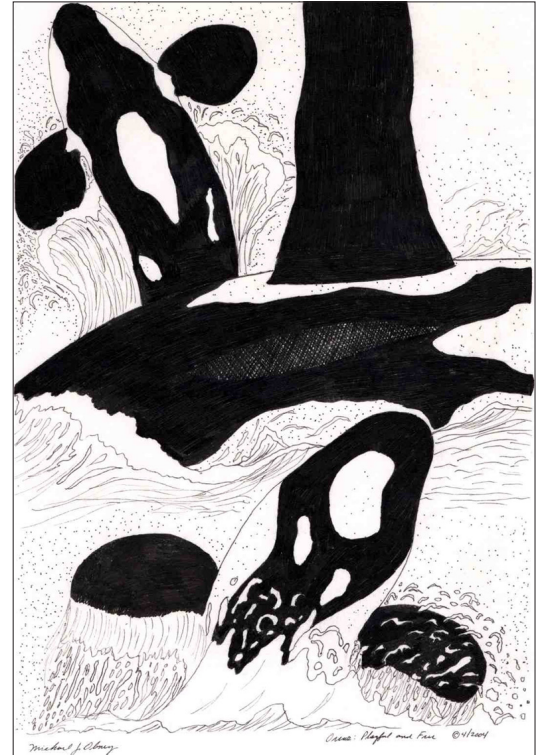
All New



Ronald Reagan shotglasses  
get em at the ship store  
quick... before they disappear

Orcas playful and free

DM1 (SW/AW) Michael Obney



Department:  
HS-4  
Job Title: Rescue  
Swimmer  
Where are you  
from? Astoria,  
Ore.  
What inspires  
you? AW1  
Shawerman  
Why did you join  
the Navy? Serve  
my country  
Who do you hold  
responsible for  
your success? My  
dad  
What piece of  
advice would you  
pass on to others?  
Never keep a  
good piece of  
advice to  
yourself



AW3 David Rankin

February 25, 2006



EMFN Joseph Rubino

February 26, 2006

Department:  
Engineering  
Job Title:  
Electrician's  
Mate  
Where are you  
from? Staten  
Island, NY  
What inspires  
you? Hard  
workers  
Why did you join  
the Navy? Serve  
my country  
Who do you hold  
responsible for  
your success? My  
parents  
What piece of  
advice would you  
pass on to others?  
Never give up





## HORSEPLAY LEADS TO SICKBAY

IT ALSO DEGRADES OUR STATE OF READINESS THROUGH LOST MANPOWER.  
FROM THE INJURED SHIPMATE, TO THOSE WHO MUST TAKE ON THE EXTRA WORKLOAD,  
HORSEPLAY HURTS EVERYONE.